Good afternoon everyone.

Iraq faces a very serious humanitarian crisis. Up to 1.8 million Iraqis have been displaced since January and many of them are living with families and communities; some in abandoned and unfinished buildings. 20 million people across Iraq have been affected since the first wave of displacement took place in January this year.

Some families have been displaced multiple times and have been left terrified by what has happened to them. Winter is fast approaching and there is a huge amount of work needed to ensure that families have protection from the cold.

The United Nations and its humanitarian partners continue to provide assistance, often in very dangerous circumstances, to all those in need across all of Iraq.

Yesterday I visited the Khanke IDP camp in Dohuk, one of the largest in the country. I have spoken with families recently displaced by the violence, who want nothing more than to return to their homes. I heard horrendous stories of violence and brutality from ‘Da’ash’ on ordinary children, women and men.

The Kurdistan region of Iraq has now received more than 850,000 internally displaced people since the beginning of the year. One in every four Iraqis displaced since January 2014 has sought refuge in Dohuk Governorate. The influx has created a massive shelter crisis, with more than half of these families sheltering in parks and other open areas, on the sides of highways, in unfinished buildings, in religious buildings and in schools. With more than 650 schools in Dohuk Governorate now hosting IDPs, thousands of Kurdish school children did not start school on 10 September as scheduled.

The UN and all its partners – including local civil society organizations – will continue to focus on providing life-saving assistance ahead of the winter.
As the international community works together with the Government to tackle the rising levels of conflict and brutality across Iraq and also Syria being meted out by ‘Da'ash’ and other armed groups, it is important to also remember the humanitarian impact.

In the three days that I have been here I have had an opportunity to meet President Masum, Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Mutlaq, who is also the chair of the High Level Committee on IDPs, KRG Prime Minister Barzani and other Ministers and officials in Baghdad, Erbil and Dohuk. I value their continued cooperation with the United Nations in our efforts to deal with the ongoing humanitarian challenges.

In collaboration with the Kurdish Regional Government, we are finalizing an operational plan to meet urgent shelter and other needs over the next two months.

I would like to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other donors for their support. But the resources available are still insufficient to meet all basic needs of the affected people. We now urgently need a clear strategy from the Iraqi Government setting out the scale of the challenge and the resources available from them to tackle it. We will work with them to complement the Iraqi Government's efforts.

The needs are enormous. A key factor in covering a significant part of the needs in this humanitarian crisis will be:
- the restoration of payment of salaries;
- the dispatching of medical supplies through the central system and;
- the resumption of the Public Distribution System for food.

These actions will greatly contribute to stabilizing the humanitarian situation. Sustained funding and support will be needed in the months ahead.

Thank you.

[ends]